

Town of Brookline
Advisory Committee Minutes

Harry K. Bohrs, Chair

Date: April 17, 2014

Present: Harry K. Bohrs, Carla Benka, Clifford M. Brown, Sumner J. Chertok, Lea Cohen, John Doggett, Bernard Greene, Amy F. Hummel, Systke Humphrey, Angela Hyatt, Alisa G. Jonas, Fred Levitan, Pamela Lodish, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, Shaari S. Mittel, Michael Sandman, Lee L. Selwyn, Stanley L. Spiegel, Leonard A. Weiss, Karen Wenc

Absent: Nancy S. Heller, Janice S. Kahn, Bobbie Knable, Charles Swartz, Kelly A. Hardebeck, Christine Westphal

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Announcements:

No Advisory Committee meetings next week; vacation week.

1. Agenda Item: Reserve fund transfer request for the Library

Present: Melissa Geoff, Assistant Town Administrator; Charles Flaherty, Director of Libraries

Discussion:

Q: Were the increases proportionate across all branches? A: Primarily at main branch of library. That's the primary user and also bad data due to estimated reads for over one year.

Q: When was the gas meter last changed? A: There's a DPW requirement that it be changed every 3 years.

Charles Flaherty: When they looked at water leak at Coolidge Corner, they knew for a while that usage was up and they looked into it for a while until they found the leak.

Vote: Upon motion duly noted and seconded, the committee voted in regard to the Reserve Fund Transfer for the library in the amount of \$19,000:

To approve, 15 unanimous.

2. Agenda Item: FY 15 School Budget Review

Presenting for the subcommittee is: Len Weiss

See Appendix for Report of Subcommittee.

Also Present: Superintendent Lupini

Weiss: Difficult budget to like. Despite financial challenges, academic achievements remain high. Last year we coined the term “bridge budget” for 2014, anticipating a sustainable budget plan in FY 2015, but we don’t have that. This budget funds expansion and goes beyond a conservative approach. Rather than another bridge, we are in the water, trying to get to the other shore. If not successful in attaining sustainable new revenue sources, we may have to turn back in terms of budget. School Committee and administration are aware of the risk, and are prepared to make hard choices next year, if additional funding doesn’t come available next year. They are also looking at evaluation of current programs. The School Committee is empowered to oversee pedagogical challenges, but limited by budget, BOS, and Town Meeting. In the FY 2015 budget, the real influence of the town is \$500,000 via the Town-School partnership. There was to be \$1 million raised through parking fees, but with some additional revenue sources, it looks a lot better and the schools will have \$1.8 million on the balance sheet. The \$1 million GIC adjustment replaced the raise in parking fees; 50% goes to the Schools and 50% goes to the Town.

Conclusion of subcommittee: 3 – 0 - 1 in favor of school budget. Weiss abstained. The real difficulty is reliance on one time funds.

SC report page 1: \$86.8 million from GF appropriation; see graph for others. \$1.1 million of reserves. Total GF is \$90.8 million. \$36.3 million spent from the town side. Revolving funds, additionally. Also grant funds: SPED, Metco. Total: \$139.9 million; \$123.1 million subject to AC and Town meeting vote.

Page 2: Used \$350,000 in reserves, and that may go away, leaving \$2.8 million in reserves entering 2015. \$4.952 million revenue growth in 2015.

Each time you get above \$89 million, you have to go out to get the budget to balance.

Note: With the using up of the reserves, it will add transparency and require Schools to live within their resources. The wild card are out of district placements which should not be considered to have to be managed within the regular operating budget.

SPED has come down from 17% to about 15% but %’s are much higher by race.

Very risky budget because of amount of one-time revenues funding items.

School Committee Presentation

Present: Superintendent Lupini, Peter Rowe,

Lupini: PowerPoint Presentation. Superintendent's FY 2015 Budget Addendum.

Q: What grade would computer accessibility start? A: Goal would be Kindergarten or 1st grade. For SPED students who require it; and also for regular education.

Kevin Stokes: Re CIP infrastructure and network. By moving funds over to the IT budget, make sure it has the right security, and the other background network infrastructure, etc. This year's CIP is to address inequities between different schools.

Old Lincoln School principal position is to plan for students arriving Sept. 2016 for 3 years.

Discussion:

Q: Price per student over time, in slide: adjusted for inflation? A: No. Q: Would it look radically different if you removed SPED? A: No, since we've had low single digit growth in our SPED budget. Controlling SPED has helped to keep the number low. The steep rise FY 08-09, was due to the 2008 over-ride, world language program, etc.

Comment: We've focused very much on the increments, but not about the underlying budget, nor about the concerns about use of reserve to fund increments. He would bet that there are areas in addition to SPED where School Department has reduced costs. Q: What is the process in your system for examining whole programs, for decreases? For the future, it would be useful to understand how the full budget is looked at, not in terms of increases, but in terms of the full expenditures. A: They do program review and evaluate other programs and make proposals for changes. Senior staff makes proposals. Comment: Demonstrating introspection to the community is important.

Lupini: The add back of the Professional Development position is not primarily due to increased enrollment. Rather relates to state-mandated requirements.

Q: New principal at Old Lincoln school: why a high level administrator looking at this transition? A: Because by July, they need their model and also to begin to hire teachers and/or move teachers over. Also to assure parents of viability of Old Lincoln school model and of who would be leading this process – someone parents knew and respected.

Comment: There is a big concern about what's in the base and where is it going. We've had incremental revenues from year to year; last year's bridge was supposed to lead to a sustainable plan this year, which we don't have. Even without OSC and were we flush in resources, the Schools would need to come forward and ask for funds for new programs. We have until December to discover what is going to be re-examined in the budget. We haven't heard anything about potential for reductions. A: School Committee will continue to discuss this. School Department will continue to discuss costs of reductions in terms of impact.

Comment: Concern about unspent resources, which go each year into reserves. A: Major source is circuit breaker – state funding that comes to us; we’ve built up a \$1m reserve from that, intended to be a contingency on what can go wrong.

Note: Steps and Lanes net \$650K, but total payout is \$1.1m.

Q: Why wasn’t there a broad search for the Old Lincoln principal? A: Trust factor here was very important, as opposed to, for example, the Lincoln School new principal. Given level of anxiety around these issues, wanted someone who would calm the waters. That’s happened with this appointment. A special circumstance.

Comment: Out of the roughly 7,500 students in Brookline public schools: 500 are non-residents (METCO + material fees). Cost is approximately \$7-8mil. Annually. Current budget process doesn’t adequately capture this part of the budget. He believes savings to SPED by bringing students back in-district is exaggerated, because it takes up space to bring students back, but none of those space costs are included in the SPED costs.

Q: On technology spending, what do they buy? A: Primarily Apple product. Existing inventory is 2,000 for students and staff.

Q: Have you made any effort to identify % of students who have computers in the homes? A: They surveyed HS students, and for a reliable device that they could use at school – 70%. Q: Have you considered subsidies to purchase their own computers? A: This is an option but they are not there, now. They are talking about teachers having a device 4 years or less. Comment: Time to address BYOD is now. A: Need system-wide technology first.

Q: Wants to know what the kids are going to do with the computers before purchasing all of these. A: This is about redesigning learning, curriculum, and assessment practices. Without this system wide investment, they will have kids who are only learning based on what they are learning. They won’t have a program for digital literacy, for example. They won’t be able to teach and assess digital literacy. It’s a new target of college and career readiness. Comment: Concern about teaching not digital literacy, but how to program and deeper usage / abilities around computers.

Comment: You do need some level of technology in the schools, and some level of consistency among the schools.

Comment: This is half-baked solution to create carts/ shared computers; rather than BYO computers.

Vote: Upon motion duly noted and seconded, the committee voted in regard to the Subcommittee’s recommendation in favor of from the General Fund: \$86,827,207

Vote: 14 in favor – 0 opposed - 4 abstained

Comment after the vote: Note: This is a high-risk budget. Still in a bridge-budget/bridge-sagging budget. There are larger issues of revenue and sustainability; all of which must be discussed and considered in a broader context.

Motion for: \$400,000 for CIP School Budget:

Vote: 17 in favor – 0 opposed – 1 abstained

3. Agenda Item: WA 24: Acceptance of a grant of easement for land and air rights for the reconstruction of the Carlton Street Footbridge. (Department of Public Works)

Presenting for the subcommittee is: Amy Hummel

See Appendix for Report of Subcommittee.

Also Present: Peter Ditto, Engineering / Transportation Director

Discussion:

Peter Ditto: Re why we need this easement. This is to codify an old easement going back to 1800's as well as new easements we need to bring us into compliance with ADA, with ramps on either side. They drew up a plan based upon architects' anticipated easement needs. They now have the language of the easement (being reviewed now by Town Counsel) which will also go to Town Meeting, and if approved by Town Meeting, will be registered with the Registry of Deeds. Fee for easement: \$10.00 (sic).

Vote: Upon motion duly noted and seconded, the committee voted in regard to the Subcommittee's recommendation:

Vote: 17 in favor – 0 opposed – 1 abstained

Motion to adjourn, unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Appendix:

- 1. Reserve Fund Memo request plus Reserve Fund History**
- 2. 2015 PSB Budget Presentation to Subcommittee Report**
- 3. WA 24: Carlton St. Funding Subcommittee Report plus Blueprint and Language of Proposed Easement**

OFFICE OF SELECTMEN

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Melissa Goff, Assistant Town Administrator
RE: **Reserve Fund Transfer for Utility Accounts- Library**
DATE: April 11, 2014

Attached herewith please find the request for a transfer from the Reserve Fund Account in the amount of \$19,000 for natural gas and water and sewer, for the Library:

A transfer of \$19,000 is needed due to the following accounts:

Natural Gas: Projected usage is expected to be higher than what was assumed in the budget. Part of this increase is weather related, and part of it can be attributed to a budget that was based on a series of estimated reads for the Main Library account. The FY14 budget was based on a three-year average of usage history billed for the Library buildings. The Main Library bill history was based primarily on estimated reads. It was discovered that the indoor meter is very old and doesn't have a transmitting device, which is why we were not getting actual reads. We have brought the situation to the attention of our contacts at National Grid so that the building can have a regular read scheduled each month until the meter is replaced and can be read remotely.

FY14 Budgeted usage: 39,082 therms

FY14 Projected usage: 67,700 therms

The projected deficit for this account is approximately \$37,000, but a projected \$20,000 surplus in the department's electricity account partially offsets this deficit. I am requesting \$17,000 from the reserve fund be transferred to cover the remaining shortfall.

Water and Sewer: One of the benefits of budgeting Water and Sewer usage in departmental budgets is that a spike in usage caused by a leak is noticed and addressed promptly due to monthly bill monitoring. Earlier this year there was a leak at the Coolidge Corner Library. As a result I am projecting a \$2,000 deficit in this account.

Recommended Action:

Favorable action on the reserve fund transfer of \$19,000.

cc: Sean Cronin
Chuck Flaherty

TOWN OF BROOKLINE

REQUEST FOR RESERVE FUND TRANSFER

Date: April 11, 2014

To the Board of Selectmen:

It is hereby requested that you approve and transmit to the Advisory Committee the following Reserve Fund Transfers:

Dept:	Library	Dept:	Library
Amount:	\$17,000	Amount:	\$2,000
Org:	61006140	Org:	61006115
Acct:	561011 (Natural Gas)	Acct:	561030 (Water & Sewer)

Description: See attached memo for details.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

APPROVED:

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

FY14 RESERVE FUND STATUS

FY14 APPROPRIATION	2,161,799
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APPROVED	
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Town Counsel - Outside Counsel (40B)	75,000
Planning and Community Development - Professional/Technical Svcs (40B)	75,000
Veterans Benefits	30,000
HR - Legal	97,000
HR - Pre-Employment	12,000
HR - Advertising	2,000

TOTAL APPROVED	291,000
TOTAL BALANCE (\$)	1,870,799
TOTAL BALANCE (%)	86.5%

REQUESTS	
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Library - Utilities	19,000
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TOTAL REQUESTS	19,000
BALANCE (\$) IF APPROVED	1,851,799
BALANCE (%) IF APPROVED	85.7%

RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS FY1995 - FY2014

[illegible]

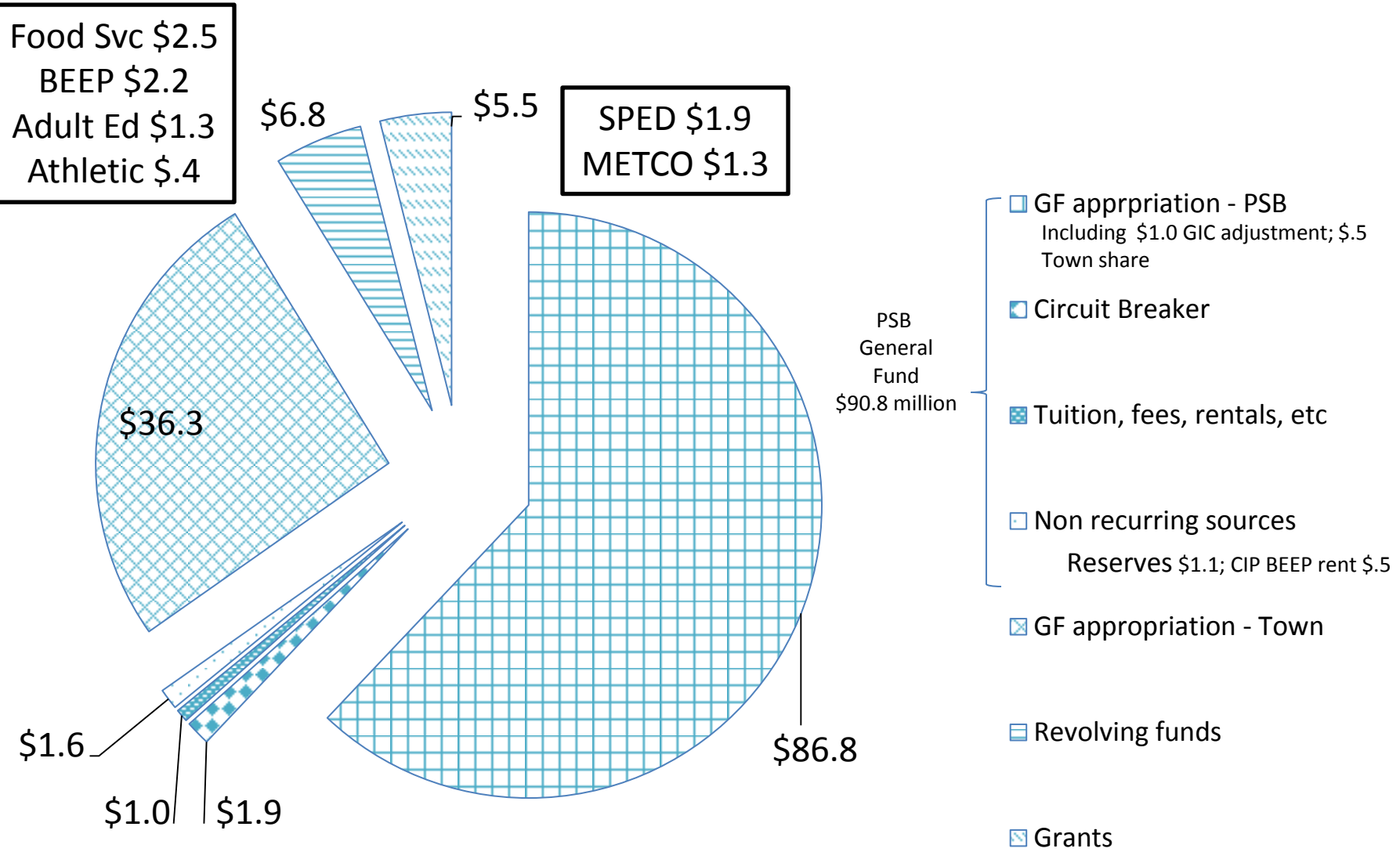
DEPARTMENT	FY1995	FY1996	FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014
Golf Course Enterprise fund							72,747													
Energy Accounts										22,597	3,200				5,600					
SCHOOLS																				
Special Education	36,000				285,000							230,000	250,000			500,000				
Early Education													85,000							
HVAC System Repairs																				
School Vacation Buy-Backs																				
Lawrence School Feasibility Study						25,000														
SELECTMEN																				
Police Chief Selection Process	12,000																			
TOWN CLERK																				
Elections		33,500					7,000								22,000					
Personnel																		107,000		
Town Census																				
Recount									7,515											
TOWN COUNSEL																				
Litigation	10,000	5,000	550	5,000	6,000	5,000	12,000	2,500	86,500	15,000		23,000	9,931.90	3,000						
Professional Services	10,000	6,000	28,150	77,000	52,547	100,000	76,000	57,302	35,000	40,000	64,000	96,577	21,500	41,500				30,000	75,000	
Claims and Settlements	80,000	20,000	5,893			10,000	115,000	75,000	20,000	5,000		17,266	48,429.19	69,000	47,404.12					
Subscriptions			2,022	5,000	5,000			5,000	5,000					3,000						
Law Book Rebinding		2,300																		
Temporary Employment		2,400																		
Office Supplies												800								
VETERANS' SERVICES																				
Benefits									20,000						25,000		35,000	24,000		30,000
TREASURER																				
Interest on Refund Taxes Account																				
Banking Services																				
FY RESERVE FUND APPROP.	769,573	769,573	789,573	815,000	820,500	834,276	875,000	930,687	1,024,730	1,070,000	1,476,305	1,524,420	1,593,755	1,675,113	1,746,545	1,834,186	1,856,956	1,877,151	1,946,946	2,161,799
ADDITIONAL APPROP. TO R.F.	0	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL RESERVE FUND	769,573	869,573	789,573	815,000	820,500	834,276	875,000	930,687	1,024,730	1,070,000	1,476,305	1,524,420	1,593,755	1,675,113	1,746,545	1,834,186	1,856,956	1,877,151	1,946,946	2,161,799
TOTAL EXPENDED	483,105	611,883	325,696	532,153	717,287	527,947	874,880	343,325	851,935	1,070,000	1,432,168	843,474	603,861	774,834	1,298,647	1,392,000	1,608,475	605,103	1,250,621	310,000
UNCOMMITTED BALANCE	286,468	257,690	463,877	282,847	103,213	306,329	120	587,362	172,795	0	44,138	680,946	989,894	900,279	447,898	442,186	248,481	1,272,048	696,325	1,851,799
% OF TOTAL RES. FUND EXP.	62.8%	70.4%	41.2%	65.3%	87.4%	63.3%	100.0%	36.9%	83.1%	100.0%	97.0%	55.3%	37.9%	46.3%	74.4%	75.9%	86.6%	32.2%	64.2%	14.3%

2015 PSB Operating Budget

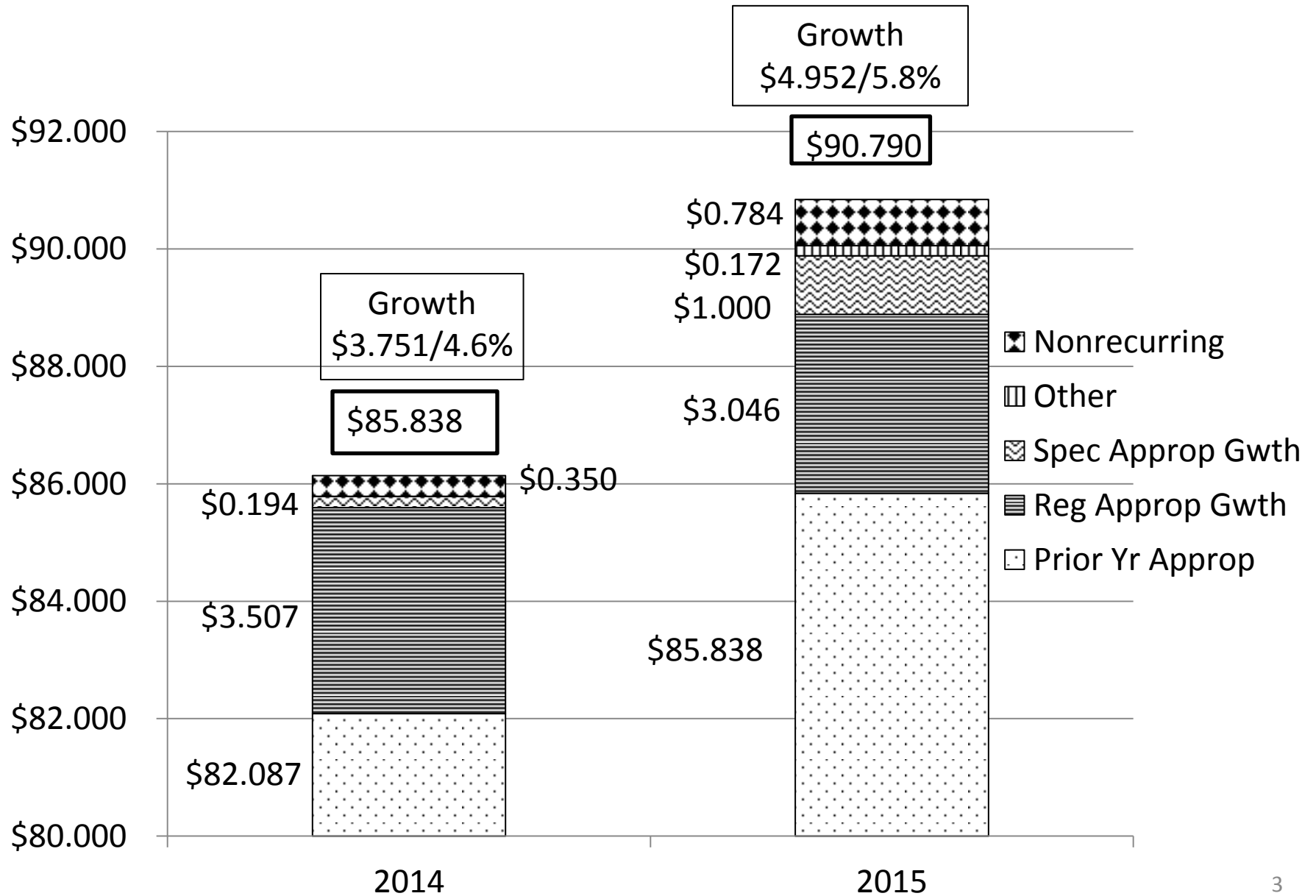
Schools Subcommittee Presentation to the Advisory Committee

April 17, 2014

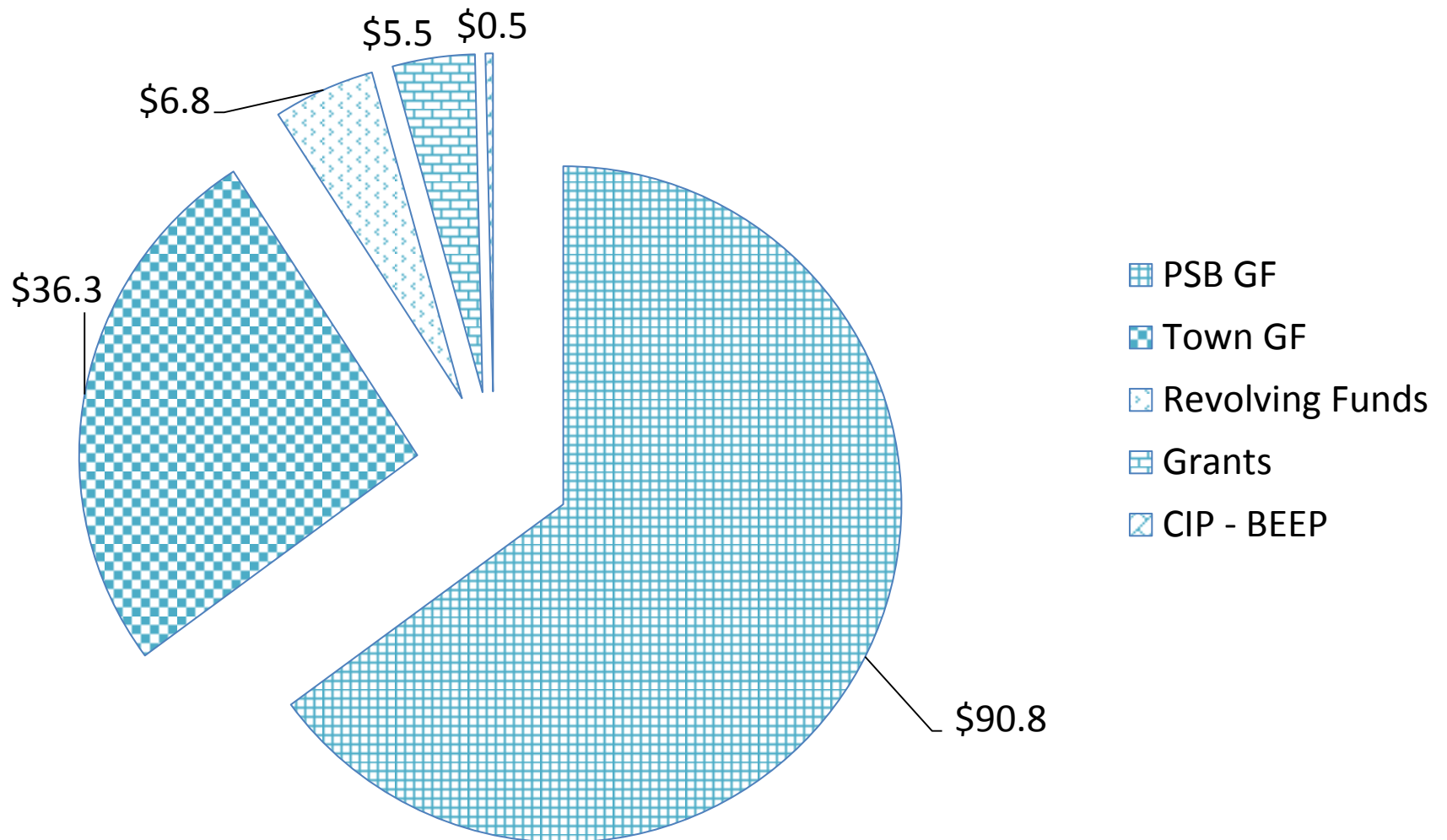
Sources of PSB 2015 Revenue \$139.9 million



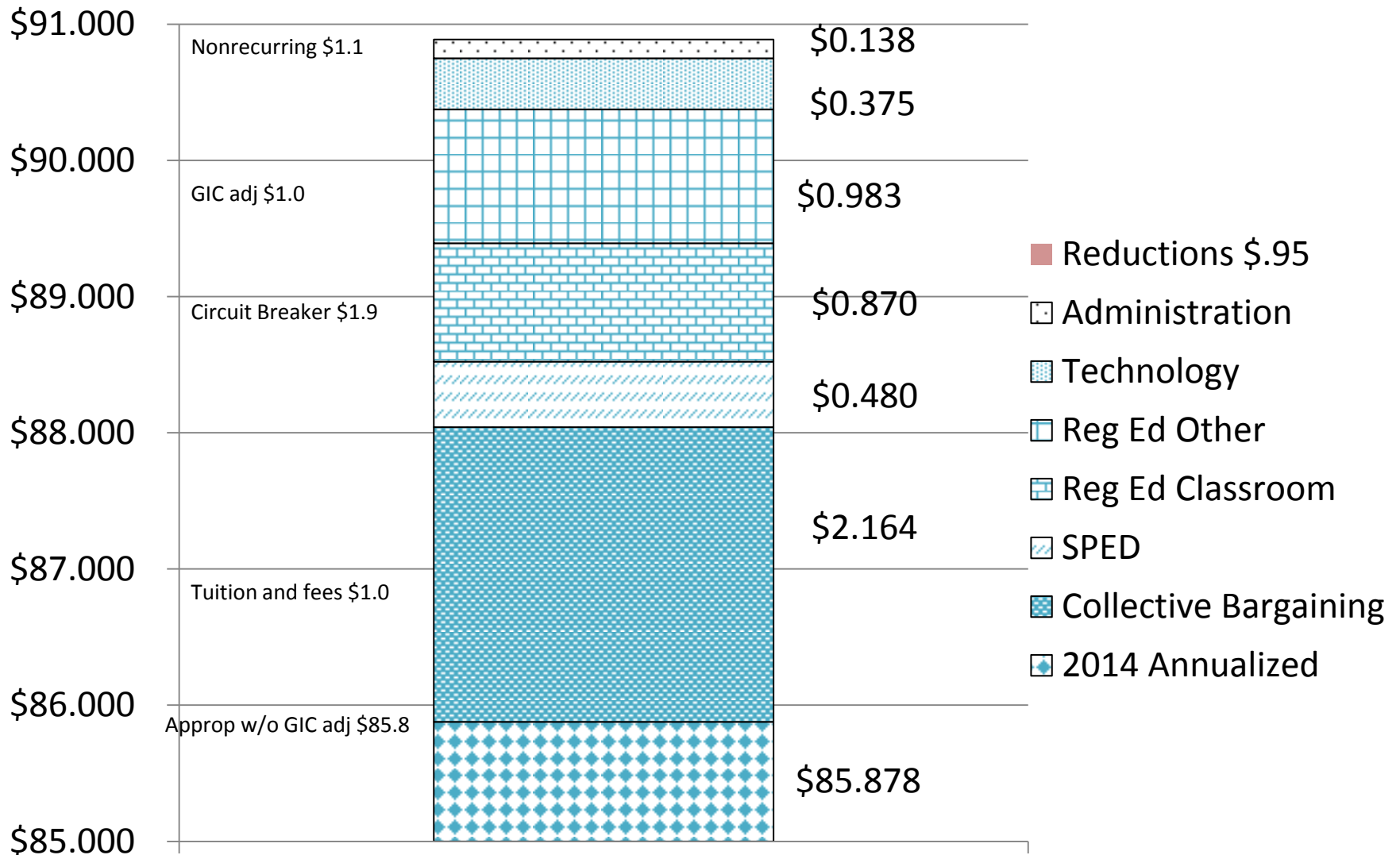
2014 and 2015 PSB General Fund Revenue Growth



PSB 2015 Spending by Fund
\$139.9 million

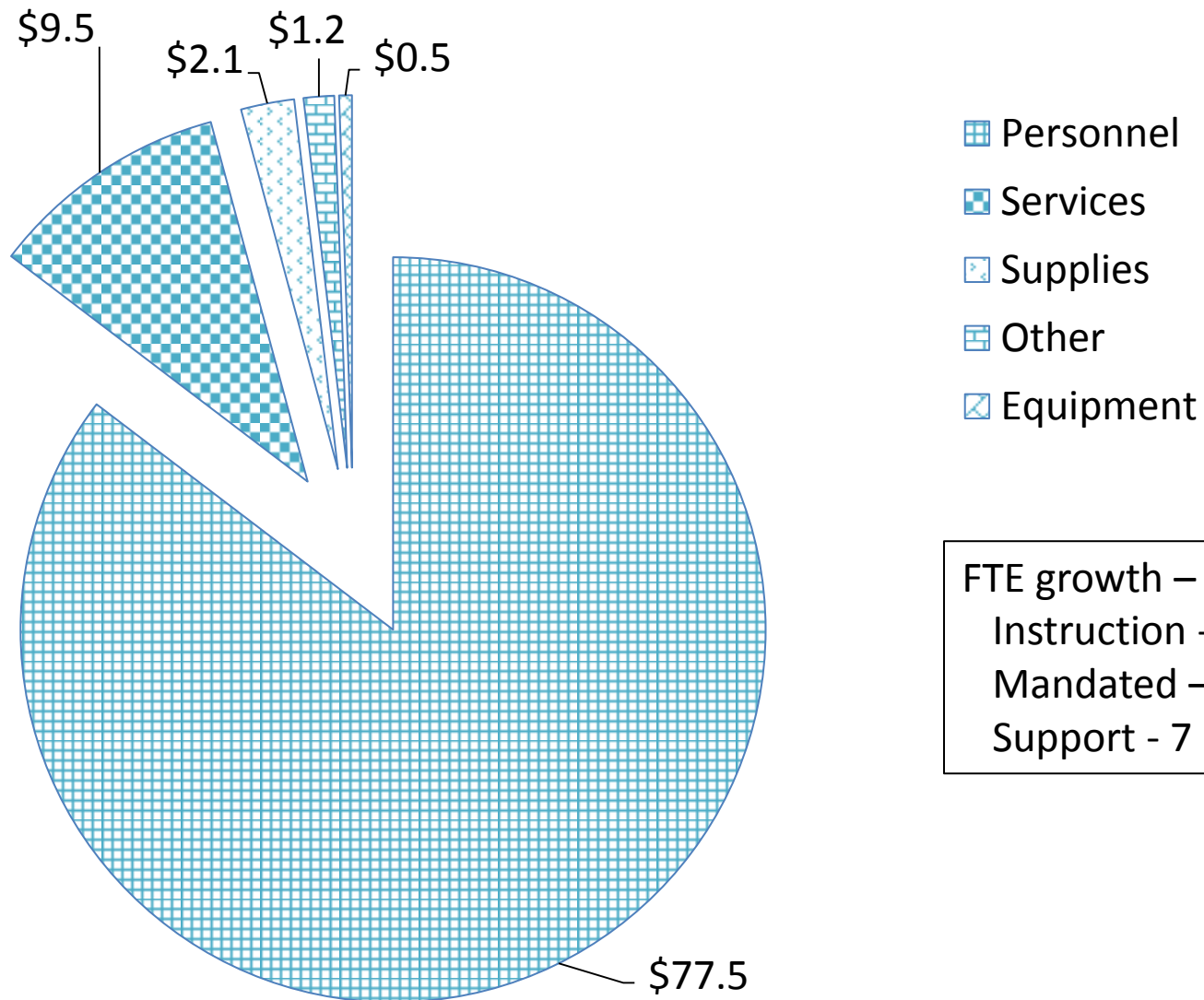


2015 PSB General Fund Spending Growth From \$85.9 to \$90.8 million Change \$4.9 million

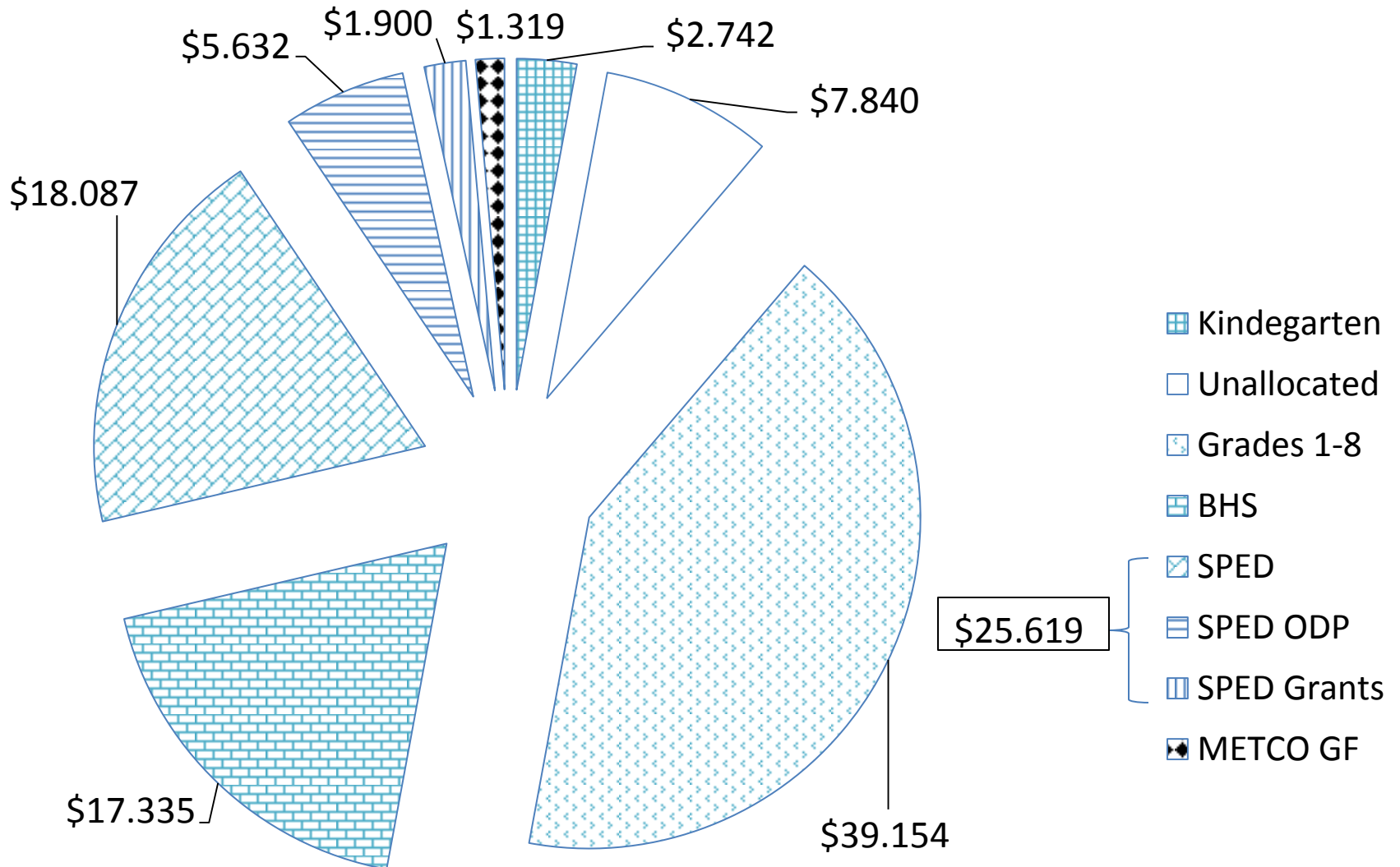


PSB 2015 General Fund Spending by Resource

\$90.8 million



PSB 2015 Spending by Grade/Program
\$96.2 million



Enrollment Data

Grade	2014	2015	SPED	
			#	%
Pre K	295	259	66	25.5
K	630	630	63	10.0
1 – 8	4,598	4,736	728	15.4
BHS	1,802	1,877	298	15.9
Total	7,325	7,502	1,152	

SPED data as of 10/1/2013. Excludes 69 ODP students in 2014 and approximately 50 services only students.

Capital Subcommittee Report: WA 24 – Spring 2014

The Capital Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee met on Monday, April 7th, 2014 at 7pm in Town Hall Room 308. In attendance were subcommittee members, Carla Benka, Pam Lodish, Fred Levitan, Amy Hummel, and Lea Cohen, the committee plus-one. Additional attendees included: Neil Gordon, TMM; Betsy Shure Gross, TMM; Henry Winkleman; Debbie Jones-Steele; Frances Allou Gershwin; Bob Schram, TMM; Carol Hillman, TMM; Peter Ditto, Engineering; , Kevin Johnson, Highways; Andrew Pappastergion, Commissioner of Public Works; Celinda Shannon; David Geanakakis; Alan Morse, School Committee Chair; Peter Rowe, Deputy Superintendent of Administration and Finance; Tony Guigli Building Department; David Pollak, School Committee; Rebecca Stone, School Committee, TMM; Adam Mitchell, TMM; Hsiu-Lan Chang, Bob Perry, Brookline Local First.

ARTICLE 24

The Department of public works submitted Article 24, asking the Town to accept an easement grant from the MBTA for land and air rights to reconstruct the Carlton Street Footbridge.

The easement will update and clarify rights originally granted to the Town by the (former) Boston & Albany Railroad in the form of a Land Lease, which as it stands, is insufficient for purposes of the Mass Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) design development process as well as Commonwealth's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding.

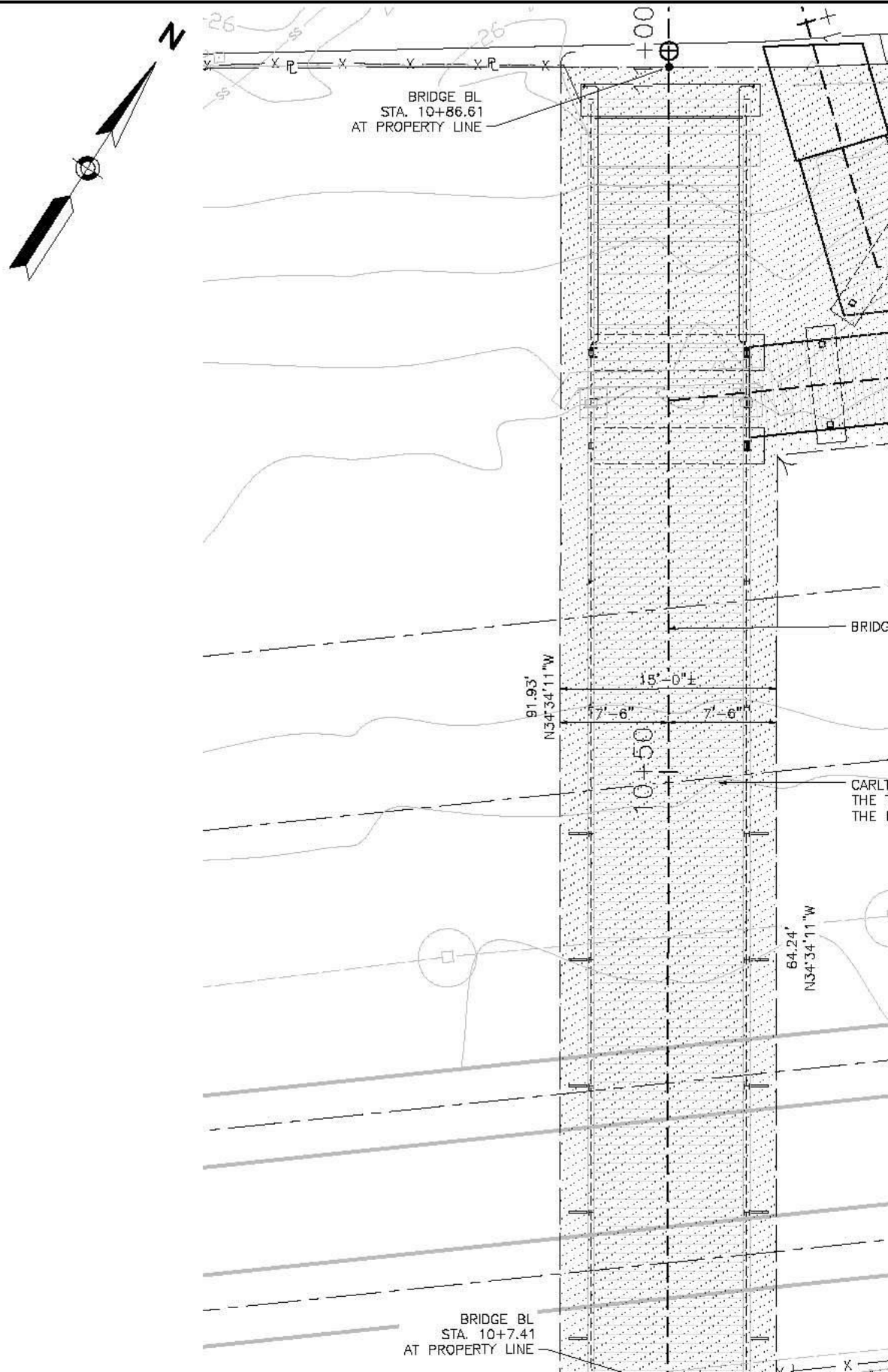
The Carlton Street Footbridge Rehabilitation project is already included in the Commonwealth's Transportation Improvement (TIP) project funding beginning in Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (October 15, 2015.)

In 2009 Town Meeting voted to raise and appropriate \$1.4 million dollars for footbridge reconstruction; however, anticipated TIP funding will pay 90% of the project costs, and the Town will pay the remaining 10%. While the revised estimates for the project costs are forthcoming, the current guesstimate for the project is \$1.8 million dollars.

The Town has already encumbered \$204,207.00 design services with the Town's consultant, Klienfelder Northeast, Inc. This funding will take us to 100% Plans, Specifications and Estimate (P. S. & E). To date, we have spent \$92,245 and we are at 25% P.S. \$ E. These funds count towards the Town's 10% share of the project, which is a condition of the grant (the aforementioned 90/10 split.

By a vote of 4-0-1, the Capital Subcommittee, plus one, voted FAVORABLE ACTION ON Warrant Article 24.

8.01-A - CARLTON ST. FOOTBRIDGE\DRAWINGS\STRUCTURAL\ACAD\PROPERTY_S6.DWG [S6] 02/27/14 1:09PM



Dear Carla,

Please share the following note from the Precinct 1 TMM's with your fellow members of the Capital Subcommittee. Thank you for your service to Brookline

April 4, 2014

Dear Members of the Advisory Committee Capital Subcommittee,

Nearly five years have passed since Town Meeting voted overwhelmingly to fund the restoration of the Carlton Street Footbridge, thereby complying with Brookline's obligations to the Muddy River Restoration and Flood Control Project. In the ensuing years, Brookline's Department of Public Works (DPW) has been working assiduously on delivering the prescribed design plans, pursuing the necessary regulatory approvals and exploring available funding sources.

Warrant Article 24, submitted by the DPW, is the next step in this steady march toward completion of the project and as such is supported unanimously by all 15 Town Meeting Members from Precinct 1.

This Article asks Town Meeting to vote to accept an easement from the MBTA for reconstruction of the Carlton Street Footbridge and its accessibility ramps, as mandated by more than 90% of Town Meeting Members in 2009.

Article 24 updates the existing permission granted in 1891 from the Boston and Albany Railroad Company, predecessor of the MBTA, to construct a footbridge over what are now the Riverside D line tracks for access to the Riverway Park in the Emerald Necklace.

This Article will enable the Town to:

- 1) Complete the application for funding from MassDOT through the Commonwealth's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) starting in Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (Oct. 1, 2015). State TIP projects are required to follow the design development process administered by the MassDOT, Highway Division. A vote by Town Meeting in 2009 committed \$1.4 million for reconstruction. TIP funding will pay 90% of the estimated project cost of \$1.8 million.
- 2) Provide universal access to Riverway Park – A substantial part of the cost of reconstruction is the addition of ramps on both north and south ends of the Footbridge, thus providing universal access to this part of Riverway Park.
- 3) Satisfy the State mandate to restore the Footbridge as a required mitigation measure of the Muddy River Restoration Project.

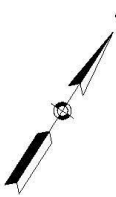
4) Move forward this lengthy restoration process which started in 1999 and to which the Town has already committed almost \$200,000 for design engineering.

Just last week three inches of rain fell in Brookline and the Muddy River rose to within two feet of its official flood stage, reminding all of us in Precinct 1 of the potential threat to Brookline's neighborhoods and the value to Brookline and Boston of the Army Corps of Engineers' project. We continue to monitor the DPW to make sure they are taking all necessary steps to expedite Brookline's formal commitments to the project and to the Carlton Street Footbridge restoration process in particular, and we remain fully committed to returning Olmsted's Riverway Park to its former glory and restoring community access to the park via our historic Footbridge.

Sincerely,

A Unanimous Precinct 1 Town Meeting Delegation

Bob Schram, Sean Lynn-Jones, Ernest Cook, Tommy Vitolo, James Franco, Cathleen Cavell, Jonathan Cutler, Carol Hillman, Elijah Ercolino, Alexandra Mistral, Paul Moghtader, Bettina Neuefeind, Richard Garver, Helen Herman, Neil Gordon and Kate Silbaugh



BROOKLINE CARLTON ST. FOOTBRIDGE OVER MBTA			
STATE	FED. AID PROJ. NO.	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS
MA		6	6
PROJECT FILE NO.		006316	



ARTICLE _____

Submitted by _____

To see if the Town will vote to accept the grant of an easement for land and air rights for the reconstruction of the Carlton Street Footbridge, and associated structural footings and accessibility ramps, from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Rail and Transit Division, under which the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ("MBTA") operates, a body politic and corporate, and a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Said easement is within the MBTA right of way.

Said easement shall reference, and serve to delineate and make current, the extant Release to the Town of Brookline from the Boston and Albany Railroad Company, an earlier Massachusetts corporation and predecessor to the present day MBTA, and then owner of the MBTA right of way, as contained in Book 655, pages 170-172, at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, and recorded on May 29, 1891.

Said easement is situated wholly within the Town of Brookline, in Norfolk County, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and is shown on a plan entitled "Plan to Accompany an Easement for the Rehabilitated Carlton Street Footbridge," dated March XX, 2014, and prepared by the Town of Brookline, Department of Public Works, Engineering/Transportation Division, in conjunction with the MBTA and/or their agent, Transit Realty Associates (TRA), to be recorded at the Norfolk Registry of Deeds with said easement, said parcel of land being bounded and described as follows:

[INSERT METES AND BOUNDS DESCRIPTION HERE]

Said easement contains _____ square feet (_____ s.f.).

Or act on anything relative thereto.